

Press release

Alighiero Boetti

Alighiero Boetti – Alighiero e Boetti

Exhibition from the 30th of April to the 21st of June 2013

Opening Tuesday the 30th of April 2013 from 6pm

Galerie Guy Bärtschi is proud to present again in Switzerland a solo show of the Italian artist **Alighiero Boetti**, more than 10 years after the previous one.

You will be able to discover, or rediscover, the work of this major 20th century artist who's important retrospectives in the last couple of years at MoMa in New York, Tate Modern in London and the Reina Sofia Museum in Madrid, have all enjoyed terrific success. Alighiero Boetti, who died in 1994, changed his name to Alighiero e Boetti in 1968 to mark the birth of his "artistic twin", left behind a tremendous body of work featured in his Catalogue raisonné which the second tome has just recently been published.

He relentlessly transforms names into letters, dates into numbers and numbers into letters, creating from these plays a world in which contradictions of an intensified duality coexist. In his works from the 1970's, the piece *UNONOVESETTEZERO* references the date of its creation using a traditional literary reading whereas the *Calendari* series are made with the numbers from calendars creating the date. Each year, 35 or 36 versions are made (depending on whether it is a bissextile year) using all the possible number combinations.

In his embroideries, which are a major part of his body of work, the viewer is also invited to decipher the numbers and the letters, with vertical readings (*SVELAREEREVELARE*), circular readings (*SEGNOEDISEGNO*) or by mixing languages even as in *VENTICINQUEPERVENTICINQUE*. This deliberate confusion of ... is also found in the drawing *Senza titolo* using the Esperanto language. One must remove the "o"s to be able to read in letters the number 1970. The same idea is used in *Mille9cento70due*.

The square, be it mathematical or graphic, holds a particular place in the works of **Alighiero Boetti**. Indeed, in *Storia naturale della Moltiplicazione* (1978), he demonstrates the mathematical principle of multiplication on large sheets of checkered paper, starting from one square to 10 times 10 squares to end up with 100 times 100 squares. In a similar spirit of obsession and meditation, in *Cimento dell'armonia e dell'invenzione* (1970), he patiently retraces the lines of 4 large blank pages, each one using a different process and establishing a series of constraints and obligatory rules to limit the freedom of his creative process.

Despite this strict self-imposed framework, Boetti is freed in his artistic research to present one work (but in fact two), one as Alighiero and the other as Boetti.